

EYAM PARISH CHURCH

The Parish Church
of
St. Lawrence, Eyam

A

Little Guide for Visitors

by

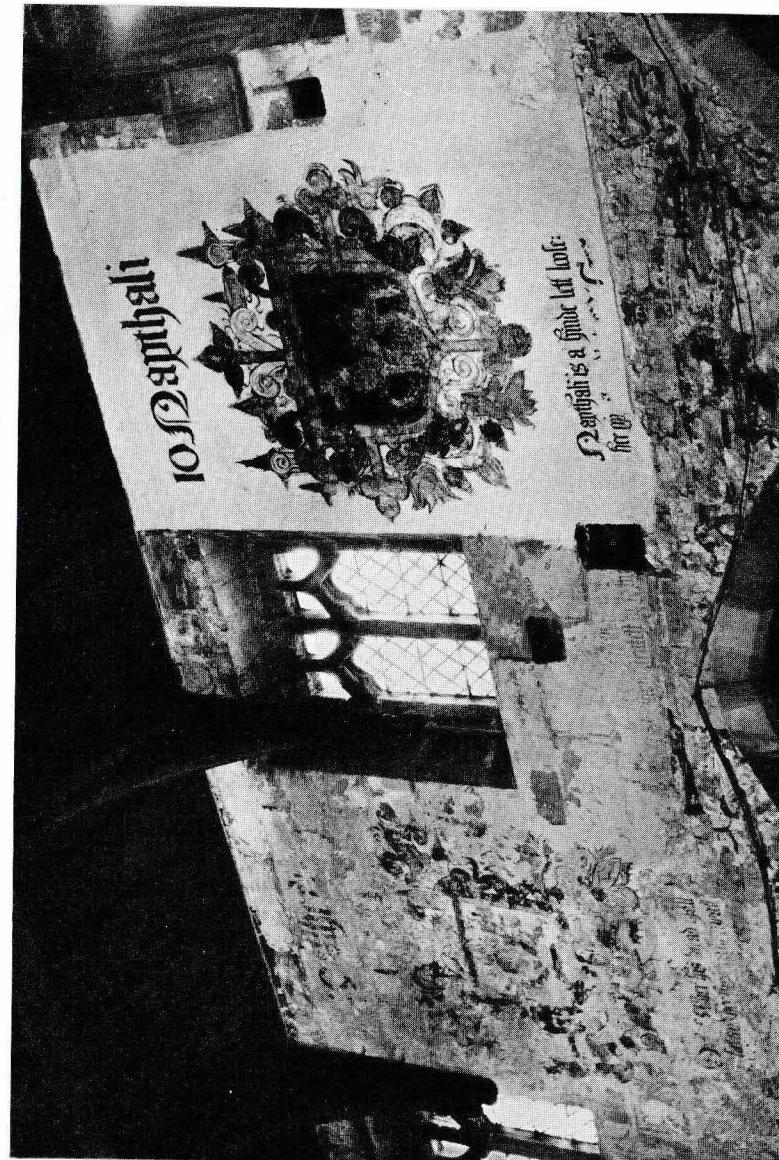
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Rector of Eyam

EYAM PARISH CHURCH

NOTES FOR VISITORS

The following notes are designed to help you, and to add interest to your visit. They cannot take the place of a full-scale history, but they are intended to remind you that you are visiting a very ancient Church, with its roots deep in a storied past. The very name of its patron saint, St. Lawrence, takes us back to the time when the profession of the Christian Faith often brought with it a martyr's death: though the Church at one time seems to have had a still earlier dedication to St. Helen, the mother of Constantine, the first Roman Emperor to embrace Christianity.

Eyam is also famous for an event which took place 300 years ago and which has stirred the hearts of men ever since. This was the visitation to the village by the Great Plague from London at the end of August 1665. The story unfolds of how a parcel of cloth was brought by carrier from London and set down at the door of the local tailor, a man called George Viccars, who lived at a cottage still standing just west of the Churchyard. Unfortunately, the cloth had become infected with the Plague germs before being despatched, and the tailor soon became the Plague's first victim in Eyam. At this stage it would have been easy for the remainder of the inhabitants to seek safety in flight. Had they done so, they might have been responsible for spreading the Plague over a large part of the North of England, and it is to their eternal glory that acting under the inspired leadership of two men, William Mompesson rector of Eyam, and Thomas Stanley, who had been his immediate predecessor, but had become a Nonconformist on his refusal to subscribe to the Act of Uniformity, the inhabitants voluntarily cut themselves off from contact with the outside world, so that the pestilence should not spread elsewhere. It meant death for many of them, for during the 15 months that the Plague did its dread work, 260 persons perished out of a presumed total population of 350. In the fields in and around Eyam you can see mute memorials to that sad time in the form of tombstones erected over victims who were buried near the places where they died, e.g. the Riley Graves, where members of the Hancock family lie buried, and the Lydgate Graves, in the village. In the Church



Two of the Nave Murals

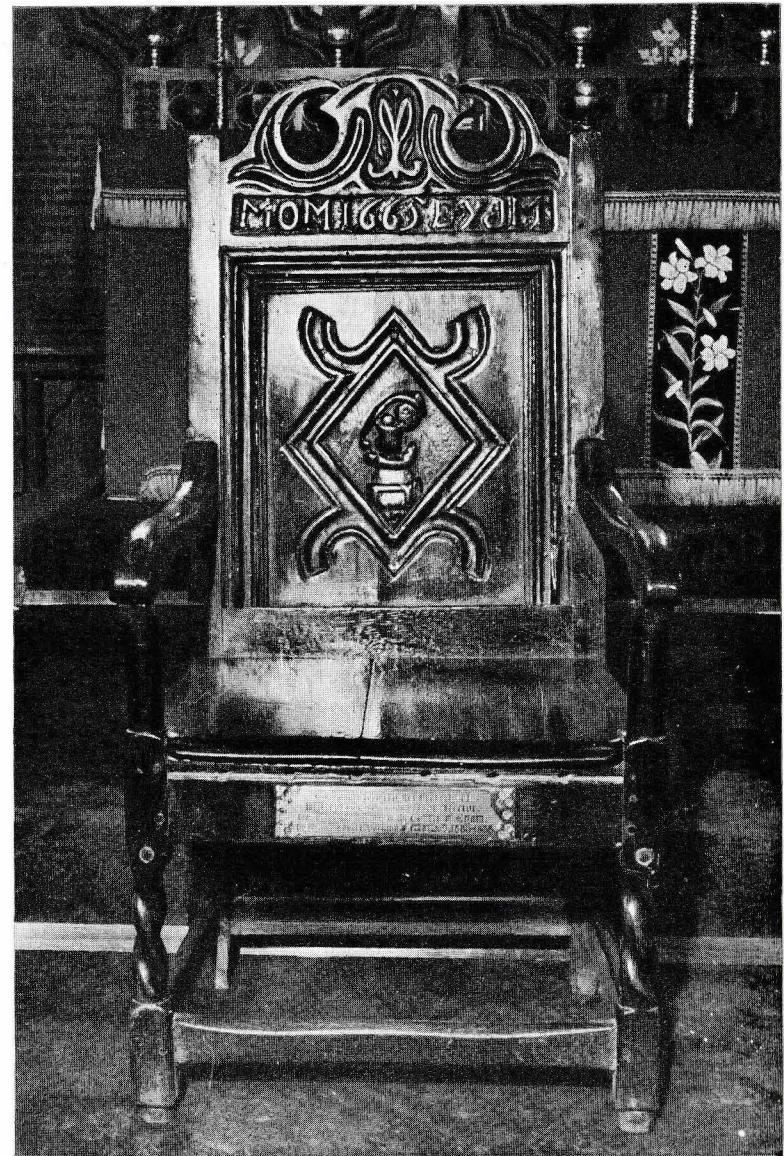
you can see the pulpit from which Mompesson preached, the so-called "Plague Cupboard", a fine chair which belonged to Mompesson, and a copy of the Plague Register, while in the Churchyard there is the notable tombstone of Catherine Mompesson, wife of the heroic rector. These are all described more fully in the text below. Mompesson and Stanley both survived the Plague, Mompesson becoming rector of Eakring, in Notts, where he remained for 38 years, and Stanley dying in Eyam in 1670. During the summer of 1965 there was a special tercentenary commemoration of this great act of heroism by a whole community.

It is time, however, to say something of the history of the Church, and to take you on a short conducted tour.

The present building dates from about 1150, and belonging to this period are the Norman font just inside the Church, and the first of the lancet windows in the north aisle, thus indicating that this aisle cannot have been as wide as it now is. The central portion of the nave may possibly be of Saxon foundation, and that a pre-Norman Church stood here is evidenced by the Saxon font in the vestry. There is also of course the evidence of the Celtic Cross in the churchyard that Christianity was known in Eyam from an early date, though this may have been erected independently of a church building, and even perhaps, elsewhere in the village.

Like most old churches, Eyam Church exhibits the changes of many centuries. The old Norman Church was largely replaced by a building in the Decorated style about 1350, and about the turn of the 15th century the clerestory must have been added in its present form, along with the particularly fine oak roof. The original Perpendicular windows still remain in the north clerestory, but those on the south side are a modern imitation. Apparently the chancel, and certainly a great part of the tower, were re-built in 1618, though fortunately the outside south chancel wall still gives some idea of its original appearance, even if the lancet windows have been restored: and the ancient priest's door giving access to the chancel still exists. It was also in the late 16th or early 17th century that the fine set of mural paintings reproducing the symbols of the Twelve Tribes must have been executed on the nave walls. These were later covered up under several coats of plaster, perhaps originally in the Commonwealth period, and after a brief uncovering last century during restoration, have only recently come to light again.

There were two full-scale restorations of the Church last century, one during the years 1866-68, to mark the bi-centenary of the Plague years, when the north aisle was enlarged, and another in 1882, when the south aisle, which had formerly contained Perpendicular windows, was



Mompesson's Chair

re-built in the Decorated style, and the porch added. It was during the 19th century too that the old flat roof of the chancel was replaced by the present sturdy barrel-shaped roof: and an ugly gallery in the nave was removed. In 1951 two of the pinnacles of the tower were replaced, and the tower roof was re-leaded.

What to see inside the Church.

Let us now make a pilgrimage round the Church, pausing first to examine what is of interest in the nave, and then passing on into the Chancel. As you enter the Church, the first object to attract your attention is the **Norman Font**, near the first pillar. This has been spoilt by an ignorant stonemason, "so scraped that it looks almost new", says Dr. Cox, in his "Derbyshire Churches". He makes this comment in the 1885/6 reprint of his book, and there is no such observation in the original edition, it is reasonable to assume that this unfortunate attempted "improvement" was done during the Church restoration of 1882. It was undoubtedly the font that stood in the original Norman Church, and in which generations of Eyam children have been baptised since 1150.

If you continue towards the centre of the Nave, on the south side of the tower arch notice the **List of Rectors**, which is complete from 1250 to the present day. You should now stand in the middle of the nave and look upwards to the very fine **Roof**. Three of its original tie beams are still left. When the Church was restored, these were placed more or less equidistant, regardless of their original position, with the odd effect that the ends of two of them are left hanging in mid-air with stone corbels supporting the two ends of one beam only. Notice the finely carved central bosses, and the quaint heads at the beam ends. There were originally 18 of these tie beams. The 15 bosses belonging to the other beams were at one time preserved in the recesses of the chancel roof, but had to be removed as they were attacked by worm.

If you look below the roof level, you cannot fail to notice the **Mural Paintings** round the clerestory walls. These were discovered quite accidentally during repair work inside the Church during the autumn of 1963. After being covered under three coats of whitewash for about 200 years, they were re-discovered about a century ago, but as they were then thought of no value, they were quickly covered up again. It has remained for us to-day to assess their true value. The following description comes from Mr. E. Clive Rouse, F.S.A., the expert who was called to advise:

"Three distinct periods of painting were identified. Surprisingly, no evidence of medieval work could be found on the lowest plaster surface.



Ancient Sepulchral Slabs

"On the west wall, flanking the tower arch, the three periods are most clear. The earliest scheme, which must probably be placed within the second half of the 16th century, consisted of a series of cartouches bearing the emblems of the Twelve Tribes of Israel, with the name or title above the quotation, from the appropriate verse of Genesis 49, verses 9-22, giving the wording of Jacob's blessing to each of his children, below, and the identification of the individual verse. Thus, on the south side appears the figure 14, which would refer to Issachar. On the north side is the word Joseph in large black letter characters. The cartouches would presumably have been placed four on each side, and two on each of the East and West walls.

"Overlying this, and on an intermediate layer of plaster, are remains of a re-painting of the Tribes series on a different level, and at a later date, perhaps Jacobean.

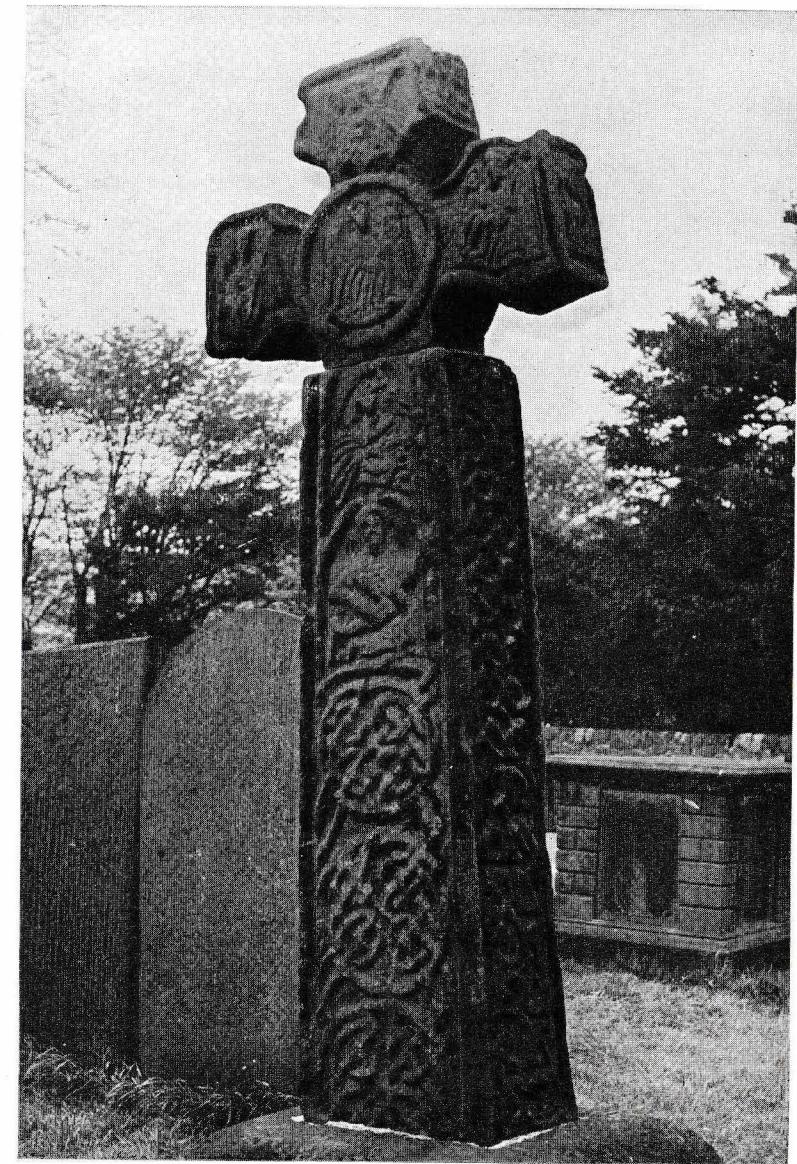
"On top of this again is part of a third scheme, of which the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, in very elaborate frames, can be identified. It was part of this set which was revealed, with the Churchwardens' names and the date 1645, when the West gallery was removed in the last century, as stated in a footnote to William Wood's History of Eyam, 7th edition.

"Over the tower arch itself are two grey scroll brackets which may well have supported a painted royal arms.

"The North Wall has remains of the two series of Tribes emblems superimposed. Reading from the west, these are: Gad (the name, in large blackletter script, just below the wall plate), a military banner: Asher, a covered cup or bowl: Napthali, a running hind. The fourth has largely perished, but traces of the titles remain at different levels. If the latter sequence is followed, verse 22 gives Joseph. It is thus clear that the two sets followed a different order, or commenced in a different place.

"The South Wall is more fragmentary; but commencing at the West, Zebulon can be identified: the emblem has gone, but would have been a ship: next is Judah, with a lion. Here considerable parts of the treatment of both series can be found. In the next spandrel are traces of painting, but insufficient for identification. The easternmost spandrel has perished".

Few other sets of paintings with this subject are known to exist, so that every step is being taken to clean and preserve the remains of this Eyam set. You will notice that one of the paintings, that of Napthali, has in fact been cleaned and repaired. Through the generosity of visitors and other friends it is hoped ultimately to complete this work of renovation.



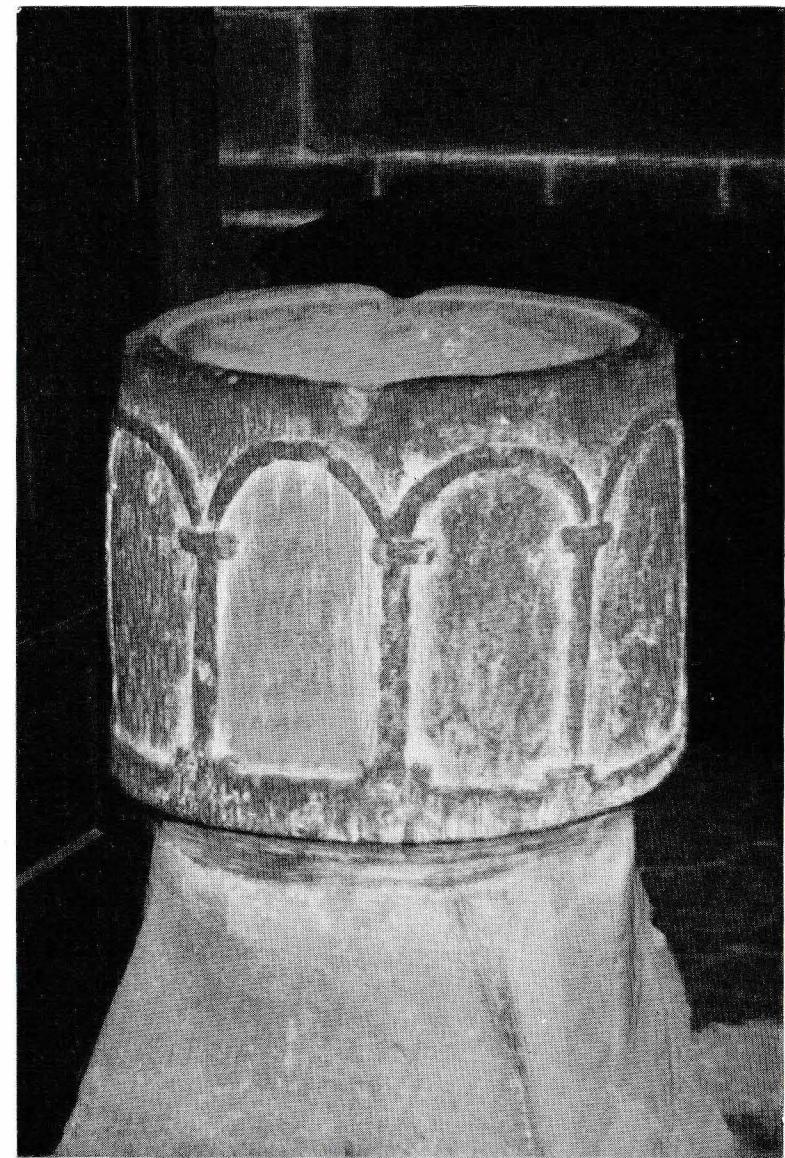
The Celtic Cross

If you let your eye wander round the Church horizontally, you will perceive the similarity between the chancel and belfry screens. They are of good 17th century workmanship, and all of them were parts of the pew of the Stafford family which stood in the north aisle, where a brass tablet records the fact. Pieces of dark wood inserted in the first four pews in the aisle are also fragments of the old pew.

The **Pulpit**, of plain but good Jacobean workmanship and with an interesting brass candlestick of later date, is reputed to have been in use at the time of Mompesson. The pulpit rail and the accompanying ironwork belong to more modern days. The eagle **lectern** is a good example of brasswork. Notice also the interesting brass memorial tablets on the pillars on the northside of the nave.

If you move over from the nave the north aisle, you are now in the site of the Chapel of St. Helen. It is recorded that during the reign of Henry III, probably in 1252, some land was granted by Eustace de Morteyn to Richard de Stafford, and again by Richard de Stafford to his son John, on condition that a lamp was kept burning before the altar of St. Helen, in the Church of Eyam, during Divine service (see also W. Wood's "Tales and Traditions of the Peak"). Hence the particular association of the Stafford family with Eyam Church. The sanctuary lamp above the Saxon font, and the lamp holder in the chancel are, thought to have had some connexion with this shrine of St. Helen. Certain it is that there was an altar here in medieval times, and the **piscina** that was then used for cleansing the sacramental vessels can still be seen in the wall on the south side of this aisle. In the north wall, opposite the piscina, is the head of a sepulchral slab, known as **St. Helen's Cross**. The lower portion of this tombstone has for some reason been erected by another similar slab by the chancel door outside the Church. A tablet on the north wall of this aisle records the 1866-68 restoration of this part of the Church.

Crossing to the south aisle, note the wall bracket to the left of the east window, supporting a figure of the Virgin. This figure was a gift to the Church a short while ago, and has an interesting history. It is a wooden carving of the 12th century, with some of the original paint still discernible, which formerly stood in a small Alpine Church, high up in the Val de Bagnes in Switzerland. When this Church fell into ruin, the statue was given to a monk at the monastery of the Great St. Bernard, from whom it passed to a former worshipper at Eyam Church, who in turn has presented it to Eyam. It is possible that this aisle also contained a Chapel and altar. In a glass frame below the bracket is a skilfully executed copy of the pages in the Parish Registers that enumerate the Plague victims, embellished with pictures of Eyam and the Church, while close at hand to the left is a fine example of a **squint**. At one time this was blocked up, but it was re-opened in 1908. There was at one



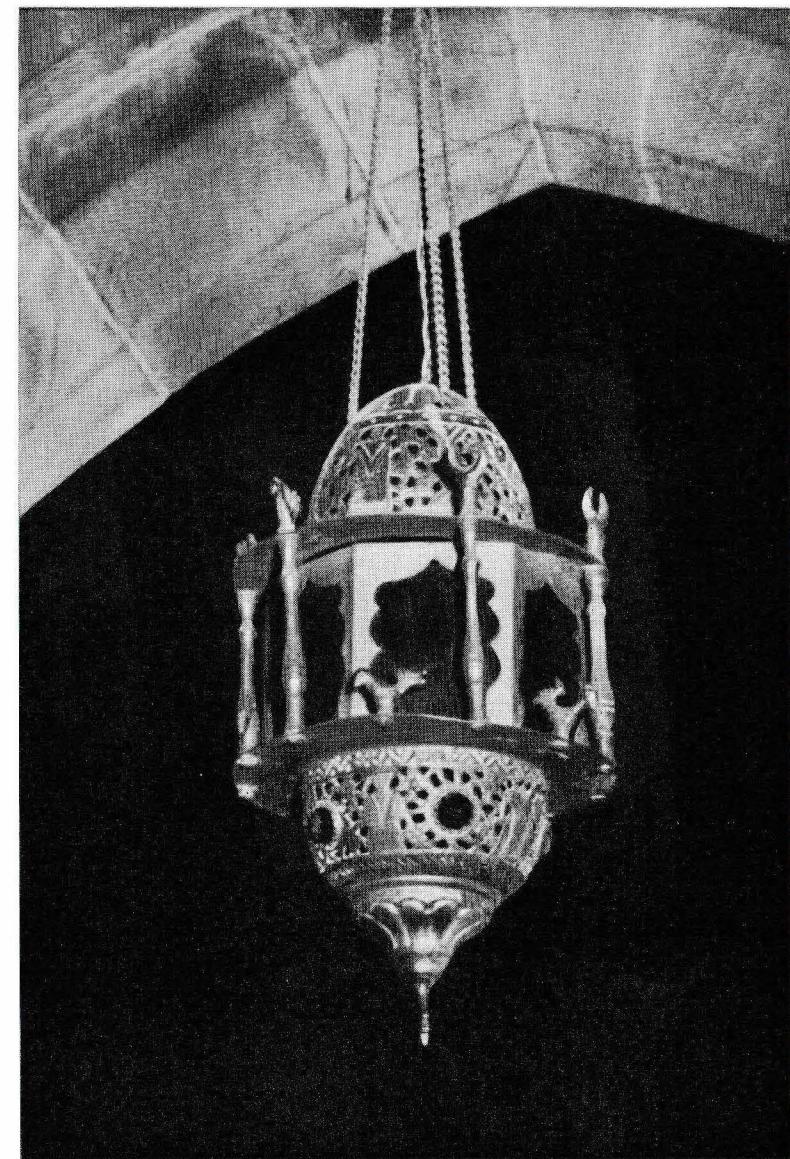
Ancient pre-Norman Font in Chancel

time a similar squint on the north side. The purpose of a squint was to enable a worshipper in the aisle to see the service of the Mass being celebrated at the High Altar and this could be done in Eyam Church, since the chancel of the Church was obviously shorter at one time than it now is.

The western end of the south aisle contains a copy of a letter sent to his patron, Sir George Saville, by William Mompesson on the death of his wife. The original of this letter has recently been discovered in the library of Chatsworth House. On the walls at this west end can also be seen the tables recording the old Eyam charities.

The **stained glass windows** in the Church are not remarkable, being executed for the most part when stained glass for Churches had become too stylised last century. The best windows in the nave are those in the north aisle of Christ blessing the children, which have good colour and design, while the window of the Last Judgment at the west end of the south aisle shows good draughtsmanship. This is a window by Christopher Webb, and his sign manual, a tiny spider's web, appears in the bottom right hand corner of the window. In the lancet window of the north aisle are some fragments of late 18th or early 19th century coloured glass. Dr. Cox records that a Mr. Thomas Birds put a painted window in the Church which was blown out by a great storm in 1822. These fragments of glass might well be bits of the original Birds' window.

If we now leave the nave for the chancel, there are several objects here to engage your attention. Notice first the **Mompesson Chair**, which stands in the sanctuary. This undoubtedly belonged to William Mompesson, and the first three letters of his surname appear carved at one side of the chair, the date 1665, in the centre, and the name Eyam at the other side. The back panel of the chair has a carving of the Madonna and Child. It was discovered in a junk shop last century, and presented to the Church by a former Rector, Canon Hacking. On the far side of the choir vestry door is the **Plague Cupboard**. In this innocent-looking cupboard hymn books are now stored. It was a gift to the Church from the one-time tenants of the Plague Cottage, and the legend is that it was made from the box which brought the fatal Plague germs to Eyam in 1665. Close at hand is the **Saxon Font**, a real treasure, discovered at Brookfield Hall, Hathersage, in the late 19th century, and there are strong grounds for believing it to have belonged originally to Eyam Church. It is crudely carved with roughly designed arches and pillars in the local gritstone, and the slots of the hinge and lock of the cover are still visible. At one time it must have been lead-lined. The best authorities pronounce it to be pre-Norman. It stands on a modern base. This font is in the rector's vestry, and on the top of the tall cupboard here stands a cinnerary urn discovered in 1911 on



St. Helen's Lamp

Eyam Moor, and supposed to date from 1500 B.C. Above this cupboard hang two early 18th century pictures of Moses and Aaron, of the kind once common in churches, and which formerly stood in the ringing chamber of the Church. The choir vestry contains a portrait gallery of former rectors of Eyam, fairly complete from the mid-18th century onwards, and with a reproduction of the painting of Mompesson in the Bishop's Library at Southwell. The Organ, installed in 1879, is by Messrs. Brindley and Foster, of Sheffield. The rector's vestry contains tombs of members of the Wright family, and of Joseph Hunt, rector, buried here in 1709; while amongst the memorial tablets in the Chancel, special mention might be made of the fine 18th century alabaster memorial to Smithson Green, of Brosterfield, on the south wall. The mid-19th century window above the sanctuary depicts incidents of Holy Week from the Agony to the Crucifixion, and illustrates the Resurrection and Ascension. One of the side chancel windows is in memory of a former organist, Thomas Wilson Froggatt, whose face, well bearded, has been chosen for that of King (called "Saint") David; while the adjoining windows have representations of Ezra the Scribe, and of Nehemiah, restorer of the Temple at Jerusalem, the latter appearing with the face of the Revd. John Green, who restored Eyam Church last century.

The tower contains a fine peal of six bells. On the four older are the following inscriptions:

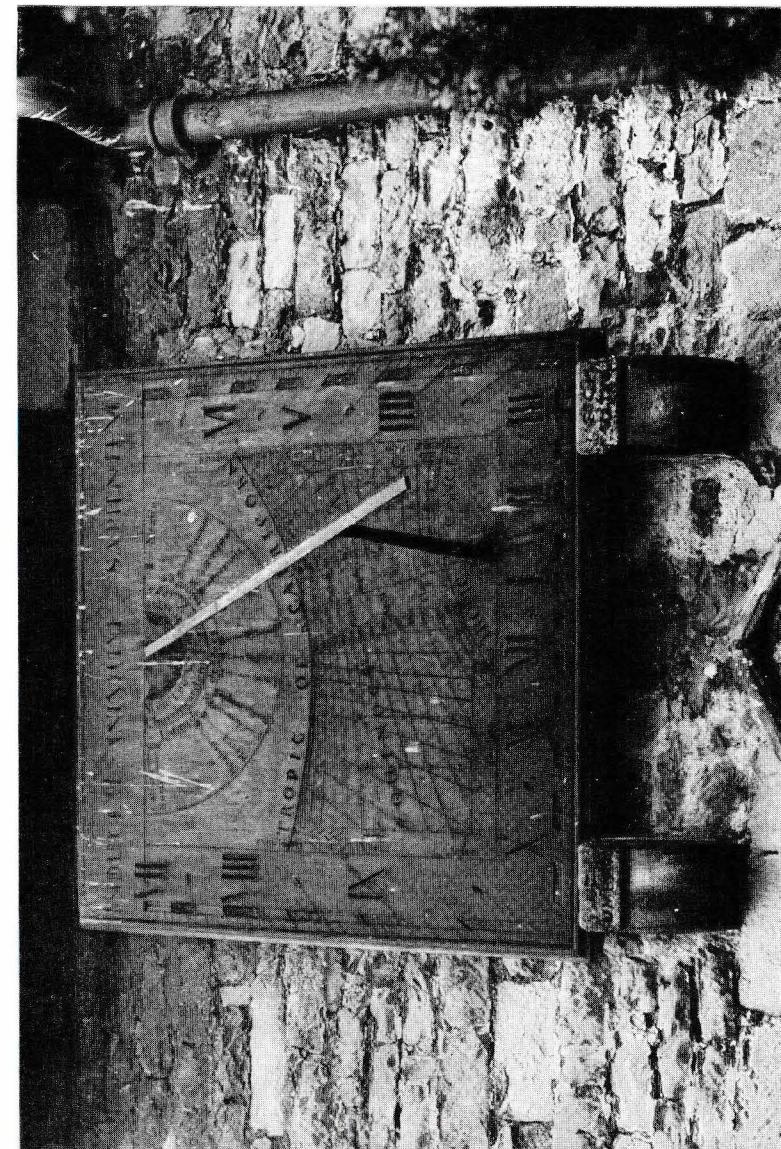
Jesus bee ovr speede	1659	G.O.
God save His Chvrch	1658	G.O.
Jesvs be ovr speed	1658	G.O.
Jesvs be ovr spede	1628.	

The initials G.O. stand for George Oldfield, of Nottingham, who cast these three bells. The bells were re-hung, and two more added, in 1926, in memory of members of the Wright family. There is a brass tablet at the back of the Church recording this as follows:

"To the Glory of God."

"The four ancient bells of this Church were increased to a ring of six by the addition of two new treble bells, one given by the Rev. W. P. Wright in memory of his parents, Canon Charles Sisum Wright and Charlotte Elizabeth his wife, and the other given by public subscription in memory of Emily Georgina Wright, their daughter, 1926."

The Church also possesses some fine **Communion Plate**, consisting of three pieces dated 1719 made by William Faudrey of London. Faudrey was a well-known silversmith of his day, and these examples



18th Century Sundial on Outside Chancel Wall

of his work are the only Faudrey plate in the Diocese of Derby. They consist of a silver flagon, a silver chalice, and a silver paten. The following expert descriptions of these are from the Survey of the Church Plate of Derbyshire made by Mr. S. A. Jeavons, F.S.A., and printed in the Derbyshire Archaeological Journal, volume 81 (1961):

"No. 60. 1719. Silver Flagon, Eyam, St. Lawrence.

"A cylindrical body with skirted base, attached to the scroll handle is a domed lid with a finial on the apex. Engraved on the body with the Sacred Monogram and inscribed 'The gift of ye HONBLE & REVD. Mr. Edward Finch Rector of Eyam in ye County of Derby, An: Dom. 1720'. Maker's mark: F.A. (William Faudrey). Height 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter 4 $\frac{1}{8}$ in., base 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., depth of bowl 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. Weight 77 oz. 11 dwt.

"No. 61. 1719. Silver chalice, Eyam, St. Lawrence.

"A tapering, beaker-shaped bowl on a wide, spool-shaped stem, with narrow central knot and trumpet-shaped foot. Engraved and inscribed as No. 60 and by the same maker. Height 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ in., diameter 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., base 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., depth of bowl 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. Weight 23 oz.

"No. 62. 1719. Silver paten, Eyam, St. Lawrence.

"A paten-cover on a knob foot, engraved and inscribed as No. 60 and by the same maker. Height 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., diameter 6 in., base 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. Weight 9 oz. 8 dwt."

What to see outside the Church.

The most magnificent feature of the Church is undoubtedly the Celtic Cross, known far and wide as one of the finest examples of its kind, and now scheduled as an ancient monument by the Office of Works. It was probably a wayside preaching cross, and may have stood west of the village, where there is still an eminence known as Cross Low. It probably dates from the 8th century, and is carved in the hard local gritstone, perhaps owing its excellent state of preservation to this. It has been called a Saxon Cross, but its composition and design are completely Celtic in character. The shaft is unfortunately not fully complete. On the arms of the Cross are figured angels, some apparently blowing instruments, and on the west side of the shaft is a seated figure and above it the Virgin and Child. There is a carved cornucopia on the back of the shaft, and there are elaborate interlacing designs on the remaining sides. A replica of this Cross, apparently with the missing portion supplied, formed the War Memorial for the First War at Blundells School, Devon.



1564-9 William Mompesson, Rector of Eyam during the Plague

William Mompesson

William Mompesson, Rector of Eyam during the time of the Plague through whose heroic exertions the people of Eyam were persuaded to remain within their own village rather than be the means of spreading the Plague to other localities.

Near to the Cross, on the south wall of the chancel, is a particularly well-cut sundial. It was formerly over the main door of the Church, and dates from 1775, when "William Lee and Thomas Frogatt" were Churchwardens (see inscription). The parallels for the sun's declinations for every month of the year are given with a scale of the sun's meridian altitude. The names of different places are marked and the difference from English time is given. The original motto on top of the sundial is "I'f duce animum sapientem" (i.e. Take to thyself a wise mind). The sundial rests on two stone corbels of last century's date with the inscription, "Ut umbra sic vita" (Like a shadow, so passes life).

A little to the east of the Cross is the fine table tomb of Catherine, wife of William Mompesson, who died of the Plague on August 15th, 1666. The mason obviously spelt the name of Mompesson wrongly, since the letter "o" in the lettering has taken the place of the letter originally cut. On the end panel, too, under the curved hour glass, the singular "Cave" has been altered to plural "Cavete" to accord with "Nescitis". Formerly the tomb was well protected by a venerable yew, blown down in a great gale of February, 1962.

A white memorial stone to Thomas Stanley, who stayed in Eyam and helped Mompesson in the Plague years, stands opposite the Mompesson tomb, and by the south chancel wall. The tomb of Abell Rowland, near here, who died January 15, 1665/66, recalls another Plague victim. Also close by is another tomb with this interesting inscription:

Here li'th
ye body of Anne Sellars bu-
ried by this Stone. Who Dy-
ed on Jan ye 15. Day 1731
Likewise Here lise dear Isaac
Sellars my Husband & my
Right. Who was buried on
that Same day Come Seven
years. 1738. In Seven years
time there Comes a Change
Obsarue & Here you'l See
On that same Day come
Seven years my Husband's
laid by Me.

203	21	Bur.	{ 1 Ruth ^{of} Daug ^t of Francis Morris, postdict. 2 An Infant of William Frith afo ^r
204	22	Bur.	{ 1 Lydia Kemp, postdict.
205	23	Bur.	Peter Hall de Boston
206	24	Bur.	An Infant of Mathew morris afo ^r
207	—	—	Katherin ^{of} wife of Mr William Mompesson (post)
208	25	Bur.	{ 1 Samuel son of John Chapman esq ^r afo ^r . 2 Anne ^{of} Daug ^t of Francis Frith deceased.
209	—	—	3. Anne ^{of} Daug ^t of Francis Frith deceased.
210	—	—	4. Joan ^{of} wife of Math ^t Howe
211	—	—	5. Thomas son of William Ashmore afo ^r
212	27	Bur.	{ 1. Thomas son of Robert & Joan Wood.
213	28	Bur.	2. William son of Math ^t Howe afo ^r
214	—	—	3. Mary ^{of} daug ^t of Christopher Abell
215	30	Bur.	{ 2. Katharine ^{of} daug ^t of Robert Ealbot deceased. 3. Francis Wilson postdict.
216	—	—	4. Francis Wilson postdict.
217	—	—	Septem ^r 9 1666
218	—	—	27 th in August.

Part of the Parish Register, showing names of Plague victims, including Catherine Mompesson.

You could spend a very happy hour collecting epitaphs in the churchyard. There are also fine examples of the 17th and 18th century stonemason's craft in the older parts of the churchyard. Amongst graves to be noted are those of Richard Furniss, the Eyam poet, William Wood, the local historian, and Thomas Adam, a veteran of Wellington's campaign in Spain and Portugal, who finally lost a leg at Waterloo against Napoleon. There is also the grave of Harry Bagshaw, the Derbyshire cricketer, who died in 1927, whose tombstone keeps up the Eyam tradition of an epitaph, and has on it a cricket bat and ball, and stumps with bails flying, and the umpire's upturned finger of dismissal.

We have come to the end of our short conducted tour, but before we leave, let us return to the Church, and say a short prayer for ourselves, for this ancient parish you have come on a pilgrimage to visit, and for the world in which we live. And may God bless you in all your ways.

Pause, travellers, who have come from afar,
Give praise to Him Who made all living things,
Remember in God's Temple who you are,
And kneel to pray before the King of kings.

EYAM PARISH CHURCH

POINTS OF INTEREST

ITS AGE. Unknown. Parts go back to the 12th Century. Stands on a Saxon foundation.

SAXON. i.e. over 1,000 years old. The bases of the two Norman pillars on the north side of the Nave. And the Saxon Font in the Clergy Vestry.

NORMAN. The two pillars on the north side of the Nave. And the Norman Font just inside the Church; this has been spoilt by foolish planing, probably in an attempted renovation. It has no drain; a relic of the day when the water was blessed twice a year and kept locked up.

NAVE. The chief interest is that here one is within the area of the original Church, possibly Saxon. The Clerestory windows on the north side are genuine Perpendicular but those on the south are comparatively modern.

THE ROOF. Has at one time been a very beautiful one. Three of the original tie beams are still there; but during restoration work in the 19th Century they were moved and spaced more or less equidistant. Note the quaint carved faces at the ends. There were originally 18 of these beams.

PULPIT. Jacobean. The same in use at the time of Mompesson, moved from the north side at the time of the 1868 Restoration, and the old clerk's seat taken away.

THE MOMPESSON CHAIR. Just inside the Chancel rails. This was a possession of the Rev. William Mompesson, the Rector in the time of the Plague. Possibly made by a local carpenter, notice the crude carving of the Madonna and Child on the Back. Presented to the Church by the Rev. Canon Hacking, a former Rector.

THE NORTH AISLE. This was doubled in width in 1868, as is recorded on a Brass. The east end was formerly the Chapel of St. Helen and the piscina, can be seen on a pillar. The curious stone built into the north wall was formerly in the east wall immediately over the centre of the altar of this Chapel. It is very ancient and may be the top of a tombstone, or part of a stone coffin.

THE BELFRY SCREEN. This is made from the ancient pew of the Stafford family which used to stand in the North aisle. Screens from the same source at one time separated the Chancel from the Nave.

CHOIR VESTRY. Set of pictures of Rectors of Eyam from Mompesson onwards.

THE SOUTH AISLE. This was enlarged and the Porch was added in 1882. On the pedestal at the east end, long vacant, there now stands a painted wooden figure of the Blessed Virgin Mary; dating from about the 12th Century and formerly in a Church, now demolished, high in the Swiss Alps. It was presented to Eyam by a former worshipper here.

THE SQUINT. This can be seen behind the pulpit. It is a hole through the wall, allowing a view of the Altar. It was opened up in 1908 and was part of the old Norman Church. It was intended for those in the south aisle to look through and observe the moment of the consecration of the Sacred Elements during the Eucharist. It no longer looks on to the Altar, owing to the fact that the Church has been lengthened. Before the 1868 restoration there was a similar Squint on the north side.

THE SAXON FONT. In the Clergy Vestry, was formerly used as a flower urn in a garden in Hathersage and was presented to Eyam Church. The crudeness of the carving should be noticed, and the marks of the hinge and lock of the ancient cover. The base is modern.

THE CINERARY URN. The remains of an ancient British burial urn can be seen on the top of a cupboard in the vestry. It was found in the parish and was intact when found. It contained a little ash and a fragment of a bone. Its approximate date would be 1500 B.C. There are a number of similar urns in the British Museum.

THE PLAGUE CUPBOARD. In the Clergy Vestry. Was at one time in Plague Cottage and is reputed to have been made from the wood of a box in which plague-infected cloth was brought to Eyam.

PLAQUE REGISTER. In the south aisle. This is copied from the Parish Register of the time, giving the names of victims of the Plague, 1665-66.

THE BELLS. This is a fine set of six; one dated 1628, two dated 1658, one 1659, and two additions of 1926.

NAVE MURALS. Originally a set of 12, representing the signs or symbols of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. Dating from the late 16th or early 17th Century. Only one similar set is known to exist. The cartouches of Naphtali (spelt Napthali), Asher, Gad, Judah, Zebulun and Issachar (part of) have now been renovated, with the appropriate words from Genesis, Chapter 49, and with the embellishments in the original designs. It is hoped before long to complete the repair of the designs above the tower arch. The creed, in black letters, over the Chancel arch, had originally been painted over the Mural on the tower arch, but after recent renovation by the experts was placed in its present position.

In the Churchyard :-

THE CELTIC CROSS. This is a famous example of Celtic art, dating from the 8th Century, and is now scheduled as an Ancient Monument. The top of the shaft is missing.

CATHERINE MOMPESSON'S TOMB. Near the South Chancel door. A table-tomb of the 17th Century. Notice the inscription and the hour glass with the motto "Nescitis Horam" and the word "Cave" corrected to the plural "Cavete".

SUNDIAL. On the south external wall of the Chancel. A well-known example of 18th Century Church Sculptor's art. Date 1775. It includes the signs of the Zodiac, place names, and Latin inscriptions on the dial and supporting corbels. Originally it was over the south door of the church but was moved during 19th Century alterations.